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SUBJECT AND OBJECT, OR UNIVERSAL POLARITY.

By RICHARD RANDOLPH.

"Sing ye praises with understanding."—*Ps.* xlvii. 7.

"Let all things be done decently and in order."—*1 Cor.* xiv. 40.

"For our process of thought is such as requires no especial acuteness and vigor of mind, being almost equally ready and open to all degrees of intelligence." (*Nostra verò inveniedi scientias ea est ratio, ut non multum ingeniorum acumini et robori relinquatur; sed quæ ingenia et intellectus ferè exæquet.*)
—*Francis Bacon.*

SYNOPSIS. — 1. *Manner and Matter: their unfathomed reciprocity suggestive at least of the true Law of Criticism.* — 2. *A manifest present Want: the most definite possible Formula of universal Duty.* — 3. *The Facts of Mind: their former empirical and complex Classification now obsolete and futile.* — 4. *The Polarity of all Experience and of all Thought.* — 5. *The implied Lesson of Order, or Subordination.* — 6. *Its only Difficulty.* — 7. *Its virtual Dignity.*

1. In oral unpremeditated converse alone can perfect communion be realized and manifested between mind and mind. There is an element of dictation, however allowable or necessary it may often be under attendant circumstances, in every premeditated effort of the orator or the essayist upon any abstract theme, which the continual interpolation of fresh inquiry or suggestion can alone remove or prevent in a true partnership of thought. But though there is danger of their being over-estimated, there is still obvious occasion for the sermon and the essay. The true flow of soul is not necessarily solitary or exclusive merely by reason of that intellectual distance between the communicants, which may render necessary a sustained argument on the part of either for the

presentation of his views. Such efforts will evidently be successful directly in proportion as they shall be made to anticipate the questionings or comments of the intelligent reader or hearer, on the simple condition of a studious attention on his part, proportional to his previous want of acquaintance with the subject treated of. However abundantly such prolonged and premeditated discourses may at any time be pressed upon us, some of them are presumably entitled to a hopeful welcome: and in the still increasing throng of such claimants, some brief and general statement of the law of criticism, one which shall do justice to the mutually dependent and often conflicting claims of manner and matter, becomes therefore increasingly necessary as a test of literary and logical pretensions.

Estimating all truth at an average value, then, for the sake of arriving at such a general statement, we may safely allege, that that which we at any time read or hear will be useful to us, in proportion either to the amount of matter which is at once fresh to us and clearly expressed, or to the amount of that which, while already more or less known to us, is there so vividly presented to us as to induce a more constant regard to it, or to both of these considerations combined. We may often think that we understand what is written, when we only recognize therein modes of thought and of expression which are familiar to ourselves and current among our associates, but which we do not at all understand aright. Such reading must evidently be fictitious reading, of the most deceptive kind, and must of course be left out of account in every just estimate and comparison of substantial literary values. The reader of the ensuing lay sermon is besought to bear these observations in mind; and to pass judgment upon the production, not according to the proportion in it, as compared with other utterances of equal length, of matter which may be to him unfamiliar and at first unintelligible, but according to the supply of fresh suggestion or expression which may mingle with the plainly trite or the seemingly unmeaning. Seeming mysticism must itself be an additional plea for cheerful toleration and hopeful attention, so far as it may possibly be due to the mere replacement of conventional fiction by sound abstraction. The appreciation of

manner, as the higher grace, should meanwhile remain unattempted. It is both safe and expedient for the critic or the student to presume at the outset upon the fitness of the verbal vehicle, and to proceed in the assurance that the mysteriousness of a true and adequate expression will be precisely proportioned to the novelty of the truth conveyed or symbolized. Matter and style, or truth of experience and aptness of utterance, must on the whole advance or recede together.

“Running while reading, taught as they pursue
Advancing good, true men all lessons true
Consider and enact.”

2. The great Atonement being confessedly “finished,” the definition and appreciation of those elements of present and future life and salvation which are not finished, plainly become the universal practical desideratum. Professional theologians have so glaringly fallen short, whether in Biblical exposition or in original speculation, of meeting this common want, that the field is evidently open to all careful explorers; and the ear of earnest workers presumably as open to all clear and competent reporters. How far the present essay may indeed report a genuine exploration in that direction, the writer can only invite such “fit audience” to determine.

3. To the faithful or truly observant liver, life is continually becoming experience. How it becomes so, is the problem which involves all other problems. That there is nothing truly originaive, any more than inherently* distinctive in the so-called faculties of the mind, is proved by their natural subjection to the limitations of time and space, a more or less entire exemption from which (such as is conceivable from the most fragmentary intimations of truly spiritual experience) must proportionally consign Memory, Reason, and Imagination, to the category of simple Perception or Observation. In other words, these diversities of mental manifestation are rather diversities in the relation of

* *That is, permanently, dividually—objectively or in the nature of things.* It must be obvious that the same process of mental construction or inference which is Imagination at one instant, may become Reason the next instant, and Memory ever afterward, and may already be so to some other mind.

mind to time and space, than diversities of mental power. They may be compared, both in derivation and in development, to different forms of a single molten material, as caught and congealed in moulds of different patterns. As merely circumstantial variations, they must be left out of account, or only incidentally included, in the investigation and demonstration of that which is essential. The great desideratum of Mental Philosophy, therefore, is a simple description of the connection, in all human life and experience, between the spiritual volition which is the directive power of individual life and the sensational impression which is the primary or crude material of individual experience. The volition from within—the exercise, that is, however inspired or however independent, of the individual will—and the sensation from without, are in fact connected by a chain of distinguishable processes or phenomena, whose definition by one mind to another becomes often exceedingly difficult, and perhaps temporarily impossible, by reason of the different spheres of experience and therefore of communion (one often, practically or socially, wholly including another) which appertain to different grades of culture, and even of inherited intelligence and sensibility. As the largest minds are also presumably the deepest, that which is consciously external, and so, glaringly obvious, to one mind, may thus be often unfathomably mystical to another of more contracted range; so that the only intellectual principle which they can be said to possess or to be able to exercise in common, is the intuition, which a faithful adherence to the lessons of experience may supply to all, that the determining power of enjoyment and enlightenment is from within rather than from without—from the perceiving and acting Subject, rather than from the observable and demonstrable Objects, of experience and action.

4. Accordingly, the one thing upon which Metaphysicians may be said to be unanimously agreed, is, the convenience of, and the necessity for, the use of the terms Subjective and Objective as distinguishing diverse phases or polar elements of experience, thought, and language.

Whether the universe is all soul, or all body, or a mixture of the two; whether thought is one with the thinker, and the

thinker one with the mind; and what may be the power and the province, the scope and the limitation, of the mysterious individual will,—are all questions which have not been unanimously decided. Indeed they cannot be, so long as investigators shall begin and prosecute their work with the purpose of framing and the hope of establishing any complete system (still less any incomplete system) of truth, rather than with that single eye to the present guidance of Divine Wisdom in the ever-progressive development of its only universal system, which can alone qualify any steadily to serve as vehicles of its inspiration. But, as already intimated, in tracing this progressive development of mind and doctrine, it is universally found necessary to have some such otherwise mystical terms as Subject and Object to designate the same thing or principle in those (to our still limited and forming view) diverse stages, aspects, or relations, which the more familiar terms, cause and effect, interior and exterior, power and vehicle or instrument, substance and phenomenon or surface, action and passion, and perhaps the Hegelian “becoming” and “being,” less comprehensively distinguish.*

* The contrast of *internal* and *external*, of *spiritual* and *material*, of *cause* and *effect*, of *substance* and *surface*, of *power* and *manifestation*, is always fugitive in any special instance or development of it, owing to that very advance in the standard of life, experience, and knowledge, which is the sole presentable proof of our living to any lasting purpose. These terms being all derived from the limited realm of human experience for the purposes of language, partake of the partiality and fallibility of that experience. Language, however, has a ground of verity or fitness outside of the largest human experience, in that analogy between the inner and the outer worlds, which, as the secret storehouse of metaphor, is the very armory of all abstract argument, because the original vehicle of all general statement. The current language is evidently the practical social embodiment of that Science of Mind in which alone the special sciences can meet, so far as they do meet, at any stage of social progress. Hence the old aphorism, “Grammar is the Janitress of the Sciences,” is no mere pedantic flourish, but a real “hard fact.” As the most comprehensive science, that of Language (or Grammar) must evolve from itself the largest or most nearly adequate expression of the largest universal fact. Now that fact, we may venture to assume, is the relationship of natural phenomenon to supernatural power, or of natural truth to supernatural truth. No other terms can so at once indicate both the largeness and the fugitiveness of this distinction as the grammatical terms Subject and Object, which are not only illustrated or exemplified in every spoken sentence, but which derive all their significance from, or through, their temporary relativity. Short, at least, of that completeness of humanity which implies the very “fulness of God,” the distinction between these terms must remain a movable (and in healthy life, of course, a progressive) one, so that we

The more urgent examples of this metaphysical polarity, and of the resulting necessity for discrimination in the analysis of human consciousness and activity may be included in the subjoined list, with the proviso that, as Perception is the avenue in which all the bodily senses converge, it must, as the real connecting link between the inner and the outer world, be regarded as being itself a thing or principle having two aspects or relations, of which the internal aspect* (the external relation) is the only one here included, viz.:

SUBJECTIVE.

OBJECTIVE.

<i>Ἡ πράξις</i> (<i>praxis</i>), THE DOING.	<i>Τὸ πρᾶγμα</i> (<i>pragma</i>), THE DEED.
Thought,	Perception.
Desire,	Emotion.
Will,	Spiritual Knowledge.

In the wider classification, which should take in the external universe on the one hand, and the self-existent spiritual Power, or Powers, on the other, Perception must of course be viewed as subjective to external fact, and the human will as objective to the Divine Will, or to the Divine and the demonic. Our list may therefore, perhaps, be somewhat more completely rendered thus:

can only speak of them relatively to each other; that which is "subjective," or internal, or even supernatural, to one person, or at one time, being "objective," or external, and wholly natural, to another person, or, at another time, to the same person. How treacherously vacillating must even the best language be to those who do not fathom this temporariness or fugitiveness, and who depend upon "the letter" for the purposes of thought rather than of intercourse, as though man were made for language, not language for man!

* It is of course impossible definitely to distinguish, in ideas and words, things which are in nature so intimately combined as to be inseparable without some change of their nature; so that, for instance, even the solar spectrum imperfectly expresses to us the constitution of light. The combination in nature of elemental potencies may be most plausibly conceived as a concentric arrangement of curvilinear strata of manifestation rather than a mere succession of planes. The true arrangement or relation of nature is doubtless not one of lateral composition or of vertical imposition, but one of involving and being involved—the rays of shorter wave, in the case supposed, being included in those of longer wave. For the purposes of intellectual analysis, therefore, it may be a smaller departure from the absolute truth of nature, to compare the constituent elements of the unshivered ray, either physical or metaphysical, to the concentric layers of a tulip-bulb, or of an onion, than to mere parallel planes without any relationship of subordination. As thus conceived, it must be apparent that the external aspect of any constituent element is that by which it is internally related to these adjoining constituents, and *vice versa*, as above assumed.

SUBJECTIVE (*praxis*).

Sensation,
 Perception,
 Thought or Emotion,*
 Desire,
 Spiritual Knowledge,
 Human Will, Choice, or Volition,
 Self-Existence,

OBJECTIVE (*pragma*).

External Universe.
 Sensation.
 Perception.
 Thought or Emotion.*
 Desire.
 Spiritual Knowledge.
 Human Will.

The complete analysis of a perfect consciousness, or of the illumination which, so far as it at all prevails, involves the whole nature of man, will doubtless be the last triumph of philosophy. Possibly, this attempt may to some minds present, or at least suggest, some advance toward the development of what may be called a psychological spectrum.†

5. The pantheistic rashness which predicates self-existence of the external universe, and which accordingly so confounds all the subjective and objective aspects of life and experience as practically to reverse their legitimate order of development, is at least herein indicated. It is indeed unhappily true that men may be tempted to live from without rather than from within, or retrogressively rather than progres-

* This apposition, which may perhaps startle some readers, is hazarded on the presumption that undefined emotion is more essentially and closely related to current or communicable thought than has been hitherto generally apprehended. The relation of bullion to coin, or of invisible moisture in the atmosphere to developed cloud, may here be found illustrative and suggestive.

† The inquiry can scarcely yet be ventured upon, how far Sensation, in some yet attainable sense of the term, may, with the other elements of a perfect consciousness at its back, be said continually to create the External Universe. The reader who is familiar with the reflections and arguments of Addison on the nature of Time, as presented in No. 94 of the "Spectator," and who has pondered the vitally important suggestions which flow therefrom in all directions, will perhaps find some seasonable illustration as well as safe suggestion in a simple stanza from a lately published poem,* on Immortality:

"So may we know the central Source of Light,
 So may its flood our finite measures fill,
 That the Creative and Redemptive Might
 May prove in every pass our treasure still."

It may, however, be neither visionary nor premature, while thus hinting at the possible analogy between the physical and a psychological spectrum, to remark, that the summary analysis of the latter in the familiar trinity of Intellect, Sensibility, and Will—or Idea, Motive, and Self-determination or individual Choice—may possibly, as ultimately rectified, be found to correspond with the reduction of the seven actual colors of the outward spectrum into the three primary ones.

sively, by a reckless inversion of that law of subordination through which alone the Divine goal of harmony in thought and feeling can at length be realized. But short of the conscious attainment or the conscious relinquishment of that happy result, the distinction between Subject and Object with their more or less diverse and sexual functions, vaguely denotable as begetting and awakening (or quickening), must remain as the widest expression of the law of human intelligence, as the basis of all present order in practice, and as the hope of all future progress in theory. Through their ever advancing subordination alone can we steadfastly regard the creation in its unbroken dependence upon the Creator, and rationally adopt and illustrate the oft-occurring and awe-inspiring adjuration, "Wait thou only upon God." The necessary objectivity of all sound and dividual or communicable thought can thus only be made to comport with its self-evident internality, and to complement the essential though neglected subjectivity of all present inspiration; and the genuine manifestation of such thought can thus only be presented in its necessary dependence* upon such inspiration, as that ever available test of truth and right in all literature and in all life which a manly independence of external means universally calls for. No otherwise, in short, can we intelligently gather the full value of the instruction which has for thousands of years fallen upon Jew and Christian from the precept, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

6. The only difficulty of apprehending this universal lesson of order or law of subordination, springs from the depth of the distinction between Subject and Object—a distinction which can no more be permanently illustrated by isolated instances, than any single vital movement of a physical organism can perpetuate its life-principle, or preserve it for the revelation of the dissecting-knife, the test-tube, or the spectroscope. Indeed, as itself a principle of vitality, that distinction represents the as yet inexhaustible and unfathom-

* "The Holy Spirit does not teach by arbitrary acts, or those acts which have no relation to the constitution of the human mind; but by silently, and yet effectually, inspiring and guiding the movements of the natural powers of perception and knowledge, in coöperation with their own action."—*Upham*.

able fact of an "irrepressible conflict" pervading all nature. It is a mystical ladder, or law of insensible gradation, upon which error and vice covertly ascend and plausibly imitate the dignity and office of truth and virtue, in all but their latest, and highest, and most invisible flights. Hence the justness, as to all minor principles, of Pope's startling epigram —

"On human actions reason as you can,
It may be reason, but it is not man:
His principle of action once explore,
That instant 'tis his principle no more."

As a primary principle of thought, lending coherency alike to the manifestations of evil and of good, the polarity of Subject and Object is in all particular applications variable and fugitive, and sure at last to betray the inquirer or the schemer who lives not in the spirit of renunciation and reverence, and whose first care accordingly is not that "all things" shall so "be done decently and in order," as to be made tributary to the ever advancing glory of God.* Such an one will surely mistake the pursuit of knowledge for the guidance of wisdom. In life, matter will more or less gain the precedence of manner; in logic, the material or the statistical—the "*à posteriori*"—be made to dominate the spiritual or the essential, the "*à priori*"; and the first practical question in theology, the relation of sanctification to justification, remain a more or less transcendental issue. In the very company of the believing may be those who, from thus failing to realize their own intellectual position, would seem to

* "The soul," writes Ralph Waldo Emerson, "can be appeased not by a deed, but by a tendency. It is in hope that she feels her wings. You shall love rectitude, and not the disuse of money or the avoidance of trade: an unimpeded mind, and not a monkish diet: sympathy and usefulness, and not hoeing or cooperating: tell me not how great your project is, the civil liberation of the world, its conversion into a Christian church, the establishment of public education, cleaner diet, a new division of labor and of land, laws of love for laws of property;—I say to you plainly there is no end to which your practical faculty can aim so sacred or so large, that, if pursued for itself, will not at last become carillon and an offence to the nostril. The imaginative faculty of the soul must be fed with objects immense and eternal. Your end shall be one inapprehensible to the senses—a goal always approached, never touched; always giving health. A man adorns himself with prayer and love, as an aim adorns an action. What is strong but goodness, and what is energetic but the presence of a brave man?"—*Method of Nature*.

rank with the swine-consuming Mahometans of Cowper's famous fable; and Emerson's perhaps less known lines have too wide an applicability to be omitted here:

"The horseman serves the horse,
The neat-herd serves the neat,
The merchant serves the purse,
The eater serves his meat;
'Tis the day of the chattel,
Web to weave, corn to grind;
Things are in the saddle,
And ride mankind."*

7. Obvious or recondite, be it repeated, Philosophy can prescribe no other corrective for the confusion and disgrace of this practical heresy and draggling bewilderment than THE SUBORDINATION OF THE OBJECTIVE. But may not this prescription, as the universal lesson of Philosophy, and as an essential element in the triumph of freedom over fate, and of immortality over death, after all be regarded as no other than the philosophical rendering of the very purpose of Christianity? Our Saviour's own statement of that which was essential has been, perhaps, too much lost sight of in our glorification of the circumstantial: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." In the conduct of the present life, the method of Christ's career in the flesh doubtless concerns his followers as responsible agents more immediately than the results of that career, however largely those results may now be embodied in the very ground and materials of our action. To a prone, object-bound, and therefore latitudinarian and retrograde nature, the Subordination of the Object may evidently represent our Lord's Crucifixion as its immediate desideratum. In a love-inspired, object-ruling, and therefore truly expansive and progressive nature, as evidently "the same rule," through the enlarged meaning that will then attach to its terms, will convey all that can be told of his Resurrection. While time shall endure, the old "stumbling-block" and "foolishness" of self-denial must thus remain as the more or less hidden law of true culture

* Ode to W. H. Channing.

and healthy development; and the true lover of his kind must be content with continually adapting it in practice and precept to the ever advancing manifestations of truth, and to the closely following transformations of error. The "mystery of iniquity" is indeed not yet obsolete: but the "mystery of godliness" is justly distinguished as "great"; and there can be no change in the fundamental principles of human nature and of divine truth which underlie and *unify* the whole history of the human race while that history shall remain incomplete. As it approaches completion, the crude manifestations of demoniac possession, and of the "rebellion which is as the sin of witchcraft," may indeed be buried more and more deeply in the grave of the past; but, short of that mysterious goal, there can be but one unvarying method of true progress and one comprehensive object of healthy aspiration, even as there is but one universal rule of initiation into that better nature which they illustrate.

"Higher and higher mounts the law that binds
 Enfranchised hearts and unperturbed minds.
 Larger and larger fact
 Restrains while liberating their career,
 As in the light of sphere encircling sphere
 New visions still attract,
 Deploying in due sequence Christ, the stair
 On which they climb to reach such survey fair.
 Let largest lore and tact,
 Possession, prudence, energy and skill
 Hasten his holy programme to fulfil!"

INTRODUCTION TO SPECULATIVE LOGIC AND PHILOSOPHY.

By A. VERA.

CHAPTER IV.

§ 1. *On Ideas.*

The universality and unity of Knowledge as well as the universality and unity of Being require a principle which should extend to all things and embrace all things in the unity of its nature. This principle, we have seen, is Thought. Viewed in this light the various branches of knowledge may